GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2334
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2007
LABORATORIES CLOSURE
Jai Prakash Shri

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has issued directions to close the laboratories issuing AGMARK standard;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Union Government for safeguarding the interests of the employees working in such closed laboratories?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a): Yes, Sir. Ministry of Agriculture has recently decided to close down five Regional Agmark Laboratories (RALs) at Guwahati, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Bangalore and Ghaziabad which were involved in testing check samples of articles marked as confirming to AGMARK Standards for detecting any AGMARK misgrading.

(b): The Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure on Work Measurement Study of the Directorate of Marketing & Inspection had recommended in their report submitted in December, 2004 for closure of these RALs due to lack of sufficient workload with their Chemists. The Ministry of Agriculture has agreed to the recommendations and has decided to close down these RALs.

(c): There are 26 employees working in these five RALs and the Ministry has decided to re- deploy them against vacant posts in other RALs after considering their choice of posting and to place surplus employees at the disposal of the Surplus Cell.